It's Too Much

Posted originally on the Archive of Our Own at http://archiveofourown.org/works/18107177.

Rating:	Teen And Up Audiences
Archive Warning:	No Archive Warnings Apply
Category:	M/M
Fandoms:	Fullmetal Alchemist: Brotherhood & Manga, Fullmetal Alchemist - All Media Types
Relationship:	Edward Elric/Ling Yao
Characters:	Edward Elric, Ling Yao
Additional Tags:	Self-Harm, Implied/Referenced Self-Harm, Depression, Self-Esteem Issues, author regrets everything, written for venting purposes, venting, Cutting, Scars, light kissing, vaguely inspired by baby don't cut
Language:	English
Stats:	Published: 2019-03-14 Words: 2,400 Chapters: 1/1

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by karinakamichi

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Disclaimer: I don't own FMA

I wrote this solely for venting reasons, so it's not that great.

Ling was very observant for his age, so it didn't take him long to notice that Edward never liked going without plenty of coverage.

Even in the few times they were in bed together, the blonde always insisted on wearing long sleeves.

For a long time, Ling didn't question it or press him to explain his reasoning, but at some point, Ling wanted to know, and decided to ask him about his aversion.

"There's something I've been wondering about." Ling broached the subject one evening.

"What is it?" Edward wanted to know.

"Why do you always wear long sleeves?" Ling asked, as gently as possible.

"It's nothing, I just get cold easily is all." Edward dismissed it, refusing to look at Ling. Clearly, it was a lie.

"I can keep you warm." Ling, however, teased him to play along, all the while trying to ignore to concern for Edward creeping up in his stomach.

“Idiot.” Edward blushed a bit at Ling’s response, but his voice was uneasy as if he was trying desperately to hold up a facade. ”You already do that enough with all of your clinginess.”

“You know I can’t help it... You’re just so beautiful, Edward.“ Ling smirked fondly, leaning down to peck him behind the ear.

Edward’s blush increased ten-fold, and he pushed his hand into Ling’s face as well as covering part of his own face with his hand. “Bastard… Don’t stay such stupid things so indiscreetly...!”

“...But I mean it…!” Ling pouted. Edward had never been the type to receive compliments well. It was almost as if he didn’t believe him. It hurt Ling to think that Edward wasn’t able to see the beauty in himself that *he* did. He reached for Edward’s hands, pulling them down so their eyes could meet. “Does it embarrass you…?”

Edward, however, turned his head away. “No… I just don’t care to be complimented all the time is all…!”

“But you really are beautiful, Edward. You know that, right...?”

Edward’s silence kills Ling. “Ed…”

“What…?” Edward murmurs.

“You heard me, right?”

“Yeah… I just don’t care to get cocky over appearances is all.” Edward muttered, beneath his breath.

“Edward, having confidence in yourself is not the same thing as being conceited. You’re not *pride* .”

“Says the guy who always wears the most exposing shirts possible…” Edward smirked.

“Hey, easy on the fashion insults, that’s a common style in Xing.” Ling retorted, but actually wasn’t all that offended.

“Yeah, whatever, idiot Prince…” Edward mocked with no ill-intention.

“*Emperor*. And I’m not an idiot...” Ling corrected, before once again, decided to bring up the topic. He needed to know what Edward was hiding. Judging by his occasional sensitivity to being touched, could somebody have been hurting him? He didn’t want to use force if he could avoid it, but if had to, he would.

“...May I…?” Ling reached up to one of his sleeves, causing Edward to immediately grow tense and try to pull away.

“Hey, I told you it’s nothing, right? There’s no need to worry about it.” Edward said quickly. It was then that Ling knew that something was definitely wrong.

“...You’re a terrible liar, Edward…” He said bluntly with pain in his voice.

“What are you talking about? I’m not-“ Edward tried to smirk it off, but was cut off by Ling.

“Please…, just stop…” Ling pleaded, silencing Edward. His voice was filled with such desperation and concern that Edward’s was guilt stricken at seeing that.

After a moment, Edward turned his head away, confirming Ling’s suspicions.

“...I don’t want you to see them…” he finally spoke, barely above a whisper, and no longer denying that he was hiding something. His voice choked up. “You’ll just end up hating me for it…”

“For what?” Ling wanted to ask, wanted to ask what Edward could have done that he’d think Ling would stop loving him over it(please don’t let it be *that*), but instead he chose not to. Instead, he said something else.

“You’re wrong, Ed.” Ling said instead. Suddenly, Edward’s alluring and brilliant golden eyes met his pained grayish blue ones. “There is nothing in this world that could make me hate you, let alone love you less than I already do. You can trust me on that.”

“...” Edward looked conflicted, like he was going to break down at any moment, tears in the corners of his eyes. “Then promise me… promise me you won’t leave me, Ling…”

There was obvious desperation in his voice. A fear that Ling would turn his back on him like his father had done.

“You have my word.” Ling smiled sincerely, offering him a small kiss on his cheek.

Edward felt his face go a little red at that, as he sat up. “...Alright. I’ll show you…”

But as he moved to pull his sleeve up, he suddenly found it harder and harder to go through with it.

“...I can do it for you if you’d like me to...” Ling volunteered in a soft voice, sensing his hesitation. He wasn’t rushing Edward, rather he was only saying it because he could sense his distress.

“...I’m just nervous…” Edward murmured. “I’ve never showed this to anybody before, not even Al. I’m kind of worried about what you’ll think…”

“Edward…” Ling gently placed a hand on top of his. “I befriended *Greed* , a homunculus and a literal embodiment of one of the seven deadly sins. Hell, I even allowed him to share a *body* with me. If I could accept *him* , despite all that *he* did, what makes you think I wouldn’t offer *you* the same satisfaction…?”

“Good point, I guess…” Edward gave a small smile at that.

Ling took Edward’s silence after that as a go ahead. Reaching out, he tried to ignore Edward’s flinch when he began to lift up on the his sleeve. However, what he saw he almost couldn’t comprehend. Edward’s flesh was littered in scars and cuts, some of which appeared to be fairly fresh.

The situation was a lot worse than he thought it was.

Ling’s eyes widened at the sight, and Edward looked down, hiding his face in shame with his bangs. Ling didn’t want to at first, but after a moment, he had no choice but to accept what he was seeing; to accept that his lover had been purposefully cutting up his own flesh.

“...What have you *done* , Ed...?” Ling became desperate. “ *Why* …?”

He’d already lost Fu and Greed, he didn’t want to lose Edward too, especially not to something like *this* .

A long and suffocating silence has settled between them. Edward doesn’t know what to say. How could he possibly explain it? It’s not like Ling could ever understand. But he decided that he at least deserved *some* kind of an explanation.

“...It distracts me… And it’s hard to explain, but this way… I guess I feel like I have control over my emotions for once...” he muttered.

“...How long…?” Ling probed. “How long have you felt this way, Edward...?”

“For as long as I can remember, but I only started a few years ago...”

Ling’s chest clinched in response. “Only“ a few *years* ?

Rarely before had Ling felt so damn helpless. If anything, this was just as bad as when Lan Fan had cut off her own arm or when he had watched Fu sacrifice himself while fighting Bradley.

No, he couldn’t just give in. There had to be something he could do to help Edward feel better. To help relieve his urge to harm himself.

“Hey, what are you...?” Edward started to ask, but trailed off into silence when Ling leaned forward to kiss him on one of his largest scars. The Blonde blushed as the Xingese man then began trailing kisses up and down his arm and neck.

“Edward,” Ling said after a long moment, wrapping his arms around the other, pulling him in for an embrace. “I know you’re hurting… And it may feel like things are too much to bear at times, but you’re *not* alone. So please don’t hurt yourself like this…”

He sounded like he was on the verge of tears.

Edward is taken aback at the hug, but soon enough, he returns it in full, feeling more guilty than ever.

“I just don’t know what to do sometimes, Ling…” He finally admits. “Everything’s been taken from me, and not even *Al* ’s around anymore… Sometimes, I just want it all to end.”

Since Alphonse had got his body back, he’d been spending less time with Edward, and Edward had honestly felt alone because of that growing distance.

But when he found out that Hohenheim had died, something inside of him snapped. It was incomprehensible to him, because he had always sworn he hated his father, but now that he was gone, something inside of him felt empty because of it, especially when thinking about the fact that Hohenheim had even offered to sacrifice himself for Alphonse's sake.

It's not like Edward wasn't strong, but even *he* had his limits to how much he could take. And now that he had completed his goal and sacrificed his alchemy to get Alphonse's body back, he felt directionless, like he didn't know where he was even going with his life anymore.

He almost felt… left behind. Ling, now emperor, and Roy were both dealing with negotiations between Xing and Amestris to become allies, and make things better for everybody, Winry was becoming an amazing and rather independent mechanic and didn't have time for him, and Alphonse was out exploring the world with his new body.

So they had all had their hands pretty full lately. It was a surprise that Ling had even managed a couple hours to spend with Edward today.

Lan Fan stood outside of their hotel room, having decided to give Edward and Ling privacy.

Ling felt his stomach clinch at the words that had just left Edward's mouth. Had Edward literally just been hinting at wanting to die?

After everything he'd went through and accomplished? After he'd finally got Alphonse his body back?

"Don't you dare talk like that, Ed." Ling said, with an unintentional harshness. In truth, he was just worried. "You *will* get through this, and I'm going to help you. I'm not about to let you just give up on living, you hear me?"

"Ling, I…"

“I know it may seem hopeless now, but things *will* get better. You just have to trust me. Can you do that?” Ling was desperate. He couldn’t sit back and let Edward destroy himself. He would find a way to help him no matter what.

“I… Alright, I can try, I guess…” Edward murmured in a low voice, sounding too unlike himself to not notice.

“Thank you, Edward… I couldn’t ask for anything more…” Ling gave a weak answer, before leaning forward a planting a small and delicate kiss on Edward’s lips. Edward, as always, froze up a bit, but momentarily relaxed and returned the kiss. After a few seconds, Ling pulled away and looked down at Edward’s arms. “Sorry…”

“What are you apologizing for?” Edward asked.

“You’ve been suffering all this time and I didn’t notice anything until just now… I should have have been there for you...” Ling said.

“What are you talking about, Ling? *None* of this is your fault… Look at me…” Edward pulled away. “You’ve been amazing to me, and you’ve made me happier than I could ever hope to make up for, so you have absolutely *nothing* to say sorry for...”

Ling simply gave a small smile at hearing that, before looking at him seriously. “Ed, I want you to come back to Xing with me and become my consort.”

Marriage? Edward choked on his spit, his face going bright red. “What?”

But then he smirked. “Surely you’re joking, right? Don’t tell me you hit your head somewhere or something…”

“I’m serious.” Ling insisted, once again meeting his eyes, and it was true, there was not a single hint of joking around in his expression. “I honestly believe you have what it takes to help me make Xing better for everyone.”

He knew it was sudden, but it was this event that made him realize how much he wanted Edward by his side. He wanted to take this opportunity to ask before it was too late.

Ling knew that there would be councillors and dictators of nobility that would disagree with him marrying another male, let alone somebody from Amestris, but he would have the support of certain people in his court that would remain by his side no matter what. It might be a little troublesome to go through with, but Ling wasn't going to give up on the prospect because of cultural regulations or minor setbacks. He would work it out.

Edward grew silent after he said that, before sighing and looking away. "You idiot, you can't just spring that kind of thing on me and expect me to come up with a decision right away…! I mean… I've never even been to Xing! How do I know I would even want to stay there?"

"Fair point…" Ling said, but wasn't detoured. "Why don't I take you sightseeing first and show you around a bit?"

Suddenly, Edward perked up a bit. The idea of a vacation in a foreign land didn't sound that bad to him, and he smirked a bit. On top of that, if he went to Xing he should be able to do more research on Alkehestry. "You know, Ling... I think I'll take you up on that."

"Really? Great!" Ling beamed. "I'll go let Lan Fan know you'll be coming back with us!"

He started to get up, but paused. "Oh, and Ed?"

"Yeah? What is it?" Edward looked up at him.

"If you ever feel like doing something like that again, you can always talk to me about it…" Ling said with all the sincerity he had.

Edward gave a small smile. "Thanks..., Ling."

“Don’t mention it.”

…

A/N: What is this? Idk I wrote it half asleep. And I have a headache.

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